

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE  
CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD**

**LAND CLEARING**

(acre)  
**CODE 460**

**DEFINITION**

Removing trees, stumps, and other vegetation from wooded areas.

**PURPOSE**

To achieve needed land use adjustments and improvements in the interest of soil and water conservation and in keeping with the capabilities of the land.

**CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES**

This practice applies to wooded areas where the removal of trees, stumps, brush, and other vegetation is needed in carrying out a soil and water conservation plan, and the land to be cleared will be used according to its capabilities.

**CRITERIA**

The plan shall specify the kinds of timber to be salvaged, lengths of logs, and place of stacking. Method of disposal shall be specified for all material not salvaged. Clearing and disposal methods shall be according to applicable state laws and with due regard to the safety of persons and property.

Special attention shall be given to maintaining or improving habitat for fish and wildlife where applicable. Consideration of such things as strip clearing, windrowing debris, and maintaining den and food trees shall be explored.

The cleared area shall be left in a neat and esthetically pleasing condition that will facilitate the planned use and treatment of the land.

This practice shall only be used as part of a complete conservation management system. Other practices will be applied on the same land as appropriate. These practices may include critical area planting (342), cover crop (340) and others.

**CONSIDERATIONS**

Effects on the water budget, especially on volumes and rates of runoff, evaporation, and transpiration.

The impact of soils settling on the variation in rates of runoff immediately after clearing.

Effects on erosion and the movement of sediment, pathogens, and soluble and sediment-attached substances carried by runoff.

**PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS**

Plans and specifications for land clearing shall be in keeping with this standard and shall describe the requirements for applying the practice to achieve its intended purpose.

The plan shall provide for the measures necessary to protect the cleared area from erosion.

**OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE**

Provisions shall be made as necessary for operations and maintenance requirements and may include a formal plan for larger or more complex designs.

The following actions shall be carried out to ensure the practice functions as intended throughout its expected life. These actions include normal repetitive activities in the application and use of the practice (operation), repair, and upkeep.

Conservation practice standards are reviewed periodically, and updated if needed. To obtain the current version of this standard, contact the Natural Resources Conservation Service.